REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 16-22, 38-44, 60-66 and 82-88 are pending in the application. Claims 16, 38, 60, 82 are amended, no claims are cancelled, and no claims are added. The amendments to the claims as indicated herein do not add any new matter to this application. Furthermore, amendments made to the claims as indicated herein have been made to exclusively improve readability and clarity of the claims and not for the purpose of overcoming alleged prior art.

I. ISSUES NOT RELATING TO PRIOR ART – CLAIM OBJECTIONS

Claims 60-66 stand objected to as allegedly unclear. Claim 60 as amended recites "*one or more processors.*" Claims 60-66 clearly recite an article of manufacture, and thus the objection is overcome.

Further, the disclosure as a whole makes clear that various embodiments can be implemented in a programmed computer, or a special-purpose computer with hardware logic, firmware logic, or a combination configured to perform the recited functions. Any such implementation is possible when the claims are properly interpreted by a person of skill in the art taking the entire disclosure into consideration. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

II. ISSUES RELATING TO PRIOR ART

A. CLAIMS 16, 18, 21, 22, 38, 40, 43, 44, 60, 62, 65, 66, 82, 84, 87 and 88 – SECTION 102 -- *GROVER*

Claims 16, 18, 21, 22, 38, 40, 43, 44, 60, 62, 65, 66, 82, 84, 87 and 88 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by *Grover, et al.,* U.S. Pat. No. 5,737,518. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 16, 38, 60, and 82

Claims 16, 38, 60, and 82 as amended each recites in part, "*receiving, from a requester that stores an incorrect attribute value for an SNMP MIB object and that is unable to read and write the SNMP MIB object directly, and* ***unable to obtain MIB object specification information****, and that does not have a correct value for the SNMP MIB object.*" *Grover* does not teach or in any way suggest the quoted feature.

Grover's test system reads a MIB output file to learn the management object's interface specification so that it can automatically generate test signals and determine whether the response received is correct. In column 3, lines 12-15, *Grover* states, "*According to one preferred embodiment of this invention, an attribute of the object is retrieved from a structure which contains the names of the objects in the object management system and the attributes corresponding to the objects.*" Fig. 1 of *Grover* shows the contents of the MIB output file being parsed and its contents being made available to the test signal generator. *Grover*'s test signal generator is the claimed requester. The relevant description of Fig. 1 in column 7, lines 29-33 states, "*The apparatus according to this invention can include MIB parser 46 which reads MIB output file 44 and selects the objects and attributes of the objects, and communicates such objects and attributes to test signal generator 48, as well as user interface 41.*" *Grover* only describes embodiments in which the test signal generator is able to obtain information contained in the MIB specification. *Grover* does not teach or in any way suggest receiving from a requester that is unable to obtain MIB object specification information, as claimed. Thus, *Grover* does not anticipate Claims 16, 38, 60, and 82. Therefore, Claims 16, 38, 60, and 82 are patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over *Grover*. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Each of Claims 16, 38, 60, and 82 includes distinguishing features that are missing in the reference. Furthermore, Claims 18, 21, 22, 40, 43, 44, 62, 65, 66, 84, 87 and 88 depend directly or indirectly on Claims 16, 38, 60, and 82 and thus include the distinguishing features that are missing in the reference.

In addition, each of Claims 18, 21, 22, 40, 43, 44, 62, 65, 66, 84, 87, and 88 introduces one or more additional features that independently render the claim patentable. However, due to the fundamental differences already identified, and to expedite the positive resolution of this case, a separate discussion of those features in not included at this time. It is respectfully submitted that Claims 18, 21, 22, 40, 43, 44, 62, 65, 66, 84, 87 and 88 are allowable for the reasons given above with respect to Claims 16, 38, 60, and 82. Therefore, the each of Claims 16, 18, 21, 22, 38, 40, 43, 44, 60, 62, 65, 66, 82, 84, 87 and 88 are patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over *Grover*. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

B. CLAIM 17 – *GROVER* AND CHISHOLM

Claim 17 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over *Grover, et al.,* U.S. Pat No. 5,737,518 in view of *Chisholm* U.S. Pat. No. 6,697,970. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 17 depends upon the independent Claim 16. Therefore, Claim 17 includes each and every feature of the independent base claim that is patentable over *Grover* for the reasons explained above. *Chisholm* does not, nor is it alleged to, disclose the features of Claim 16 missing in *Grover* as argued above. Therefore, Claim 17 is patentable over the combination of *Grover and Chisholm.*

In addition, Claim 17 introduces one or more additional features that independently render the claim patentable. However, due to the fundamental differences already identified, and to expedite the positive resolution of this case, a separate discussion of those features in not included at this time. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

C. CLAIMS 20, 42, 64 and 86 – *GROVER* AND KWAN

Claims 20, 42, 64 and 86 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over *Grover, et al.,* U.S. Pat No. 5,737,518 in view of *WhitePaper: IronShield Best Practices Hardening Foundry Routers & Switches to Kwan.* The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 20, 42, 64, and 86 are dependent on claims 16, 38, 60, and 82 respectively. Therefore, each of Claims 20, 42, 64, and 86 includes the same distinguishing features as their corresponding independent claims that were already shown to be patentable over *Grover. WhitePaper: IronShield Best Practices Hardening Foundry Routers & Switches to Kwan* does not, nor is it alleged to, disclose the distinguishing features of Claims 16, 38, 60, and 82 that are missing in *Grover* as argued above. Therefore, Claims 20, 42, 64, and 86 are patentable over the combination of *Grover and WhitePaper: IronShield Best Practices Hardening Foundry Routers & Switches to Kwan.*

In addition, each of Claims 20, 42, 64, and 86 introduces one or more additional features that independently render the claim patentable. However, due to the fundamental differences already identified, and to expedite the positive resolution of this case, a separate discussion of those features in not included at this time. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

For the reasons set forth above, it is respectfully submitted that all of the pending claims are now in condition for allowance. Therefore, the issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance is believed next in order, and that action is most earnestly solicited.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is believed that such contact would further the examination of the present application.

A petition for extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136 is hereby made to the extent necessary to make this reply timely filed. Please charge any applicable fee that is missing or insufficient to Deposit Account No. 50-1302.

Respectfully submitted,

Hickman Palermo Truong & Becker LLP

Dated: October 17, 2008

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